

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A mutant of a microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus*, said mutant having a higher sensitivity to lysozyme than a wild-type microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus*.
2. (Original) The microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus* according to claim 1, wherein the microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus* is *Rhodococcus erythropolis*.
3. (Original) The microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus* according to claim 2, wherein the *Rhodococcus erythropolis* is *Rhodococcus erythropolis* strain L-65 (Accession No. FERM BP-8443) or *Rhodococcus erythropolis* strain L-88 (Accession No. FERM BP-8444).
4. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a protein, comprising transforming a mutant of a microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus*, said mutant having a higher sensitivity to lysozyme than a wild-type microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus* according to any one of claims 1 to 3, by a gene encoding an exogenous protein; then expressing the gene; and treating the microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus* with lysozyme, thereby extracting and recovering the protein.
5. (Original) The method of producing a protein according to claim 4, wherein the microorganism of the genus *Rhodococcus* is *Rhodococcus erythropolis*.
6. (Original) The method of producing a protein according to claim 5, wherein the *Rhodococcus erythropolis* is *Rhodococcus erythropolis* strain L-65 (Accession No. FERM BP-8443) or *Rhodococcus erythropolis* strain L-88 (Accession No. FERM BP-8444).